

## Intellect, the Instrument of Religious Training

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

**T**HIS day we celebrate one of the most remarkable feasts in the calendar. We commemorate a Saint who gained the heavenly crown by prayers indeed and tears, by sleepless nights and weary wanderings, but not in the administration of any high office in the Church, not in the fulfilment of some great resolution or special counsel; not as a preacher, teacher, evangelist, reformer, or champion of the Faith; not as Bishop of the flock, or temporal governor; not by eloquence, by wisdom, or by controversial success; not in the way of any other saint whom we invoke in the circle of the year; but as a mother, seeking and gaining by her penances the conversion of her son. It was for no ordinary son that she prayed, and it was no ordinary supplication by which she gained him. When a holy man saw its vehemence ere it was successful, he said to her: "Go in peace; the son of such prayers cannot perish." The prediction was fulfilled beyond its letter; not only was that young man converted, but after his conversion he became a saint; not only a saint, but a doctor also, and "instructed many unto justice." St. Augustine was the son for whom she prayed; and if he has been a luminary for all ages of the Church since, many thanks do we owe to his mother, St. Monica, who, having borne him in the flesh, travailed for him in the spirit.

The Church, in her choice of a Gospel for this feast, has likened St. Monica to a desolate widow whom Our Lord met at the gate of the city, as she was going forth to bury the corpse of her only son. He saw her, and said. "Weep not"; and he touched the bier, and the dead arose. St. Monica asked and obtained a more noble miracle. Many a mother who is anxious for her son's bodily welfare, neglects his soul. So did not the Saint of today; her son might be accomplished, eloquent, able and distinguished; all this was nothing to her while he was dead in God's sight, while he was the slave of sin, while he was the prey of heresy. She desired his true life. She wearied Heaven

with prayer, and wore out herself praying; she did not at once prevail. He left his home; he was carried forward by his four bearers, ignorance, pride, appetite and ambition; he was carried out in a foreign land, he crossed over from Africa to Italy. She followed him, she followed the corpse, the chief, the only mourner; she went where he went, from city to city. It was nothing to her to leave her dear home and her native soil; she had no country below; her sole rest, her sole repose, her *Nunc dimittis*, was his new birth. So while she still walked forth in her deep anguish and desolation, and her silent prayer, she was at length rewarded by the long-coveted miracle. Grace melted the proud heart, and purified the corrupt breast of Augustine, and restored and comforted his mother; and hence, in today's Collect, the Almighty Giver is especially addressed as "*Moerentium consolator et in Te sperantium salus*"; the consoler of those that mourn, and the health of those who hope.

And thus Monica, as the widow in the Gospel, becomes an image of Holy Church, who is ever lamenting over her lost children, and by her importunate prayers, ever recovering them from the grave of sin; and to Monica, as the Church's representative, may be addressed those words of the Prophet: "Put off, O Jerusalem, the garments of thy mourning and affliction and look about toward the East, and behold thy children; for they went out from thee on foot, led by the enemies; but the Lord will bring them to thee exalted with honor, as children of the kingdom."

#### AUGUSTINE'S ETERNAL QUEST

This, I say, is not a history of past time merely, but of every age. Generation passes after generation, and there is on the one side the same doleful, dreary wandering, the same feverish unrest, the same fleeting enjoyments, the same abiding and hopeless misery; and on the other, the same anxiously beating heart of impotent affection. Age goes after age, and still Augustine rushes forth again and again, with his young ambition, and his intellectual energy, and his turbulent appetites; educated, yet untaught; with powers strengthened, sharpened, refined by exercise, but unenlightened and untrained, goes forth into the world,

ardent, self-willed, reckless, headstrong, inexperienced, to fall into the hands of those who seek his life, and to become the victim of heresy and sin. And still, again and again, does hapless Monica weep; weeping for that dear child who grew up with her from the womb, and of whom she is now robbed; of whom she has lost sight; wandering with him in his wanderings, following his steps in her imagination, cherishing his image in her heart; keeping his name upon her lips, and feeling withal, that, as a woman, she is unable to cope with the violence and the artifices of the world. And still again and again does Holy Church take her part and her place, with a heart as tender and more strong, with an arm, and an eye, and an intellect more powerful than hers, with an influence more than human, more sagacious than the world, and more religious than home, to restrain and reclaim those whom passion, or example, or sophistry is hurrying forward to destruction.

My Brethren, there is something happy in the circumstance, that the first Sunday of our academical worship should fall on the feast of St. Monica. For is not this one chief aspect of a university, and an aspect which it especially bears in this sacred place, to supply that which that memorable Saint so much desiderated, and for which she attempted to compensate by her prayers? Is it not one part of our especial office to receive those from the hands of father and mother, whom father and mother can keep no longer? Thus, while professing all sciences, and speaking by the mouths of philosophers and sages, a university delights in the well-known appellation of "*Alma Mater*." She is a mother who, after the pattern of that greatest and most heavenly of mothers, is, on the one hand, *Mater Amabilis*, and *Causa nostrae laetitiae*, and on the other, *Sedes Sapientiae* also. She is a mother, living, not in the seclusion of the family, and in the garden's shade, but in the wide world, in the populous and busy town, claiming, like our great Mother, the meek and tender Mary, "to praise her own self, and to glory, and to open her mouth," because she alone has "compassed the circuit of heaven, and penetrated into the bottom of the deep, and walked upon the waves of the sea," and in every department of

human learning, is able to confute and put right those who would set knowledge against itself, and would make truth contradict truth, and would persuade the world, that, to be religious, you must be ignorant, and to be intellectual, you must be unbelieving.

#### THE NATURE OF THE MIND.

My meaning will be clearer if I revert to the nature and condition of the human mind. The human mind, as you know, my brethren, may be regarded from two principal points of view, as intellectual and as moral. As intellectual, it apprehends truth; as moral it apprehends duty. The perfection of the intellect is called ability and talent; the perfection of our moral nature is virtue. And it is our great misfortune here, and our trial, that, as things are found in the world, the two are separated, and independent of each other; that, where power of intellect is, there need not be virtue; and that where right and goodness, and moral greatness are, there need not be talent. It was not so in the beginning; not that our nature is essentially different from what it was when first created; but that the Creator, upon its creation, raised it above itself by a supernatural grace, which blended together all its faculties and made them conspire into one whole, and act in common toward one end; so that, had the race continued in that blessed state of privilege, there never would have been distance, rivalry, hostility, between one faculty and another. It is otherwise now; so much the worse for us; the grace is gone; the soul cannot hold together; it falls to pieces; its elements strive with each other. And as, when a kingdom has long been in a state of tumult, sedition, or rebellion, certain portions break off from the whole and from the central government, and set up for themselves; so it is with the soul of man. So is it, I say, with the soul, long ago, that a number of small kingdoms, independent of each other and at war with each other, have arisen in it, such and so many as to reduce the original sovereignty to a circuit of territory and to an influence not more considerable than they have themselves. And all these small dominions, as I may call them, in the soul, are, of course, one by one incomplete and defective, strong in some points,

weak in others, because not any one of them is the whole, sufficient for itself, but only one part of the whole, which, on the contrary, is made up of all the faculties of the soul together. Hence you find in one man, or one set of men, the reign, I may call it, the acknowledged reign of passion or appetite; among others the avowed reign of brute strength and material resources; among others, the reign of intellect; and among others (and would they were many!) the more excellent reign of virtue. Such is the state of things, as it shows to us, when we cast our eyes abroad into the world; and every one, when he comes to years of discretion, and begins to think, has all these separate powers warring in his own breast: appetite, passion, secular ambition, intellect and conscience, and trying severally to get possession of him. And when he looks out of himself, he sees them all severally embodied on a grand scale, in large establishments and centers outside of him, one here and another there, in aid of that importunate canvass, so to express myself, which each of them is carrying on within him. And thus, at least for a time, he is in a state of internal strife, confusion and uncertainty, first attracted this way, then that, not knowing how to choose, though sooner or later choose he must; or rather, he must choose soon, and cannot choose late, for he cannot help thinking, speaking and acting; and to think, speak and act is to choose.

#### THE SEPARATION OF VIRTUE AND INTELLECT.

This is a very serious state of things; and what makes it worse is that these various faculties and powers of the human mind have so long been separated from each other, so long cultivated and developed each by itself, that it comes to be taken for granted that they cannot be united, and it is commonly thought, because some men follow duty, others pleasure, others glory, and others intellect, therefore that one of these things excludes the other; that duty cannot be pleasant, that virtue cannot be intellectual, that goodness cannot be great, that conscientiousness cannot be heroic; and the fact is often so, I grant, that there is a separation, though I deny its necessity. I grant, that, from the disorder and confusion into which the human mind has fall-

en, too often good men are not attractive, and bad men are; too often cleverness, or wit, or taste, or richness of fancy, or keenness and agreeableness, is on the side of error and not on the side of virtue. Excellence, as things are, does lie, I grant, in more directions than one, and it is ever easier to excel in one thing than in two. If, then, a man has more talent, there is the chance that he will have less goodness; if he is careful about his religious duties, there is the chance he is behindhand in general knowledge; and in matter of fact in particular cases persons may be found, correct and virtuous, who are heavy, narrow-minded, and unintellectual and again, unprincipled men, who are brilliant and amusing. And thus you see, my Brethren, how that particular temptation comes about, of which I speak, when boyhood is past, and youth is opening; not only is the soul plagued and tormented by the thousand temptations which rise up within it, but it is exposed moreover to the sophistry of the Evil One, whispering that duty and religion are very right indeed, admirable, supernatural, who doubts it?—but that, somehow or other, religious people are commonly either very dull or very tiresome: nay, that religion itself after all is more suitable to women and children, who live at home, than to men.

#### THE GROWTH OF SKEPTICISM.

O my Brethren, do you not confess to the truth of much of what I have been saying? Is it not so, that, when your mind began to open, in proportion as it opened, it was by that very opening made rebellious against what you knew to be duty? In matter of fact, was not your intellect in league with disobedience? Instead of uniting knowledge and religion, as you might have done, did you not set one against the other? For instance, was it not one of the first voluntary exercises of your mind, to indulge a wrong curiosity, a curiosity which you confessed to yourselves to be wrong, which went against your conscience, while you indulged it? You desire to know a number of things, which it could do you no good to know. This is how boys begin; as soon as their mind begins to stir it looks the wrong way, and runs upon what is evil. This is their first wrong step; and their next use of their intellect

is to put what is evil into words: This is their second wrong step. They form images, and entertain thoughts, which should be away, and they stamp upon themselves and others by expressing them. One wrong speech provokes another; and thus there grows up among them from boyhood that miserable tone of conversation, hinting and suggesting evil, jesting, bantering on the subject of sin, supplying fuel for the inflammable imagination, which lasts through life, which is wherever the world is, which is the very breath of the world, which the world cannot do without, which the world "speaks out of the abundance of its heart," and which you may prophesy will prevail in every ordinary assemblage of men, as soon as they are at their ease and begin to talk freely, a sort of vocal worship of the Evil One, to which the Evil One listens with special satisfaction, because he looks on it as the preparation for worse sin; for from bad thoughts and bad words proceed bad deeds. Bad company creates a distaste for good, and hence it happens that, when a youth has gone the length I have been supposing, he is repelled from that very distaste, from those places and scenes which would do him good. He begins to lose the delight he once had in going home. By little and little he loses his enjoyment in the pleasant countenances, and untroubled smiles, and gentle ways of that family circle which is so dear to him still. At first he says to himself that he is not worthy of them, and therefore keeps away; but at length the routine of home is tiresome to him. He has aspirations and ambitions which home does not satisfy. He wants more than home can give. His curiosity now takes a new turn; he listens to views and discussions which are inconsistent with the sanctity of religious faith. At first he has no temptation to adopt them; only he wishes to know what is "said." As time goes on, however, living with companions who have no fixed principle and, who, if they do not oppose, at least do not take for granted, any of the most elementary truths, or worse, hearing, or reading what is directly against religion, at length, without being conscious of it, he admits a skeptical influence upon his mind. He does not know it, he does not recognize it, but there it is, and, before he recognizes it, it leads him to a fretful, impatient way

of speaking of the persons, conduct, words, and measures of religious men or of men in authority. This is the way in which he relieves his mind of the burden which is growing heavier and heavier every day. And so he goes on, approximating more and more closely to skeptics and infidels, and feeling more and more congeniality with their modes of thinking, till some day, suddenly, from some accident, the fact breaks upon him, and he sees clearly that he is an unbeliever himself.

#### HOW FAITH IS LOST.

He can no longer conceal from himself that he does not believe, and a sharp anguish darts through him, and for a time he is made miserable; next, he laments indeed that former undoubting faith, which he has lost, but as some pleasant dream; a dream, though a pleasant one, from which he has been awakened, but which, however, pleasant; he forsooth cannot help being a dream. And his next stage is to experience a great expansion and elevation of mind; for his field of view is swept clear of all that filled it from childhood, and now he may build up for himself anything he pleases instead. So he begins to form his new ideas of things, and these please and satisfy him for a time; then he gets used to them and tires of them, and he takes up others; and now he has begun that everlasting round of seeking and never finding; at length, after various trials, he gives up the search altogether, and decides that nothing can be known, and there is no such thing as truth, and that if anything is to be professed, the creed he started from is as good as any other, and has more claims; however, that really nothing is true, nothing is certain. Or, if he be of a more ardent temperament, or, like Augustine, the object of God's special mercy, then he cannot give up the inquiry, though he has no chance of solving it, and he roams about, "walking through dry places, seeking rest, and finding none." Meanwhile poor Monica sees the change in its effects, though she does not estimate it in itself, or know exactly what it is, or how it came about; nor, even though it be told her, can she enter into it, or understand how one, so dear to her, can be subjected to it. But a dreadful change for him and for her; a wall of separation has grown up between them: she



cannot throw it down again; but she can turn to her God, and weep and pray.

Now, my Brethren, observe the strength of this delusion lies in there being a sort of truth in it. Young men feel a consciousness of certain faculties within them which demand exercise, aspirations which must have an object in religious circles. This want is no excuse for them, if they think, say, or do anything against faith or morals; but still it is the occasion of their sinning. It is the fact, they are not only moral, they are intellectual beings, but, ever since the fall of man, religion is here, and philosophy is there; each has its own centers of influence, separate from the other; intellectual men desiderate something in the homes of religion, and religious men desiderate something in the schools of science.

#### WHY THE CHURCH FOUNDS UNIVERSITIES.

Here, then, I conceive, is the object of the Holy See and the Catholic Church in setting up universities; it is to reunite things which were in the beginning joined together by God, and have been put asunder by man. Some persons will say I am thinking of confining, distorting and stunting the growth of the intellect by ecclesiastical supervision. I have no such thought. Nor have I any thought of a compromise, as if religion must give up something, and science something. I wish the intellect to range with the utmost freedom, and religion to enjoy an equal freedom; but what I am stipulating for is, that they should be found in one and the same place, and exemplified in the same persons. I want to destroy that diversity of centers, which puts everything into confusion by creating a contrariety of influences. I wish the same spots and the same individuals to be at once oracles of philosophy and shrines of devotion. It will not satisfy me, what satisfies so many, to have two independent systems, intellectual and religious, going at once side by side, by a sort of division of labor, and only accidentally brought together. It will not satisfy me, if religion is here, and science there, and young men converse with science all day and lodge with religion in the evening. It is not touching the evil, to which these remarks have been directed, if young men eat and drink and sleep in

one place, and think in another: I want the same roof to contain both the intellectual and moral discipline. Devotion is not a sort of finish given to the sciences; nor is science a sort of feather in the cap, if I may so express myself, an ornament and set-off to devotion. I want the intellectual layman to be religious, and the devout ecclesiastic to be intellectual.

This is no matter of terms nor of subtle distinctions. Sanctity has its influence; intellect has its influence; the influence of sanctity is the greater on the long run; the influence of intellect is greater at the moment. Therefore, in the case of the young, whose education lasts a few years, where the intellect is, there is the influence. Their literary, their scientific teachers, really have the forming of them. Let both influences act freely, and then, as a general rule, no system of mere religious guardianship which neglects the reason, will in matter of fact succeed against the school. Youths need a masculine religion, if it is to carry captive their restless imaginations, and their wild intellects, as well as to touch their susceptible hearts.

Look down then upon us from heaven, O blessed Monica, for we are engaged in supplying that very want which called for thy prayers, and gained for thee thy crown. Thou who didst obtain thy son's conversion by the merit of thy intercession, continue that intercession for us, that we may be blest, as human instruments, in the use of those human means by which ordinarily the Holy Cross is raised aloft, and religion commands the world. Gain for us, first that we may intensely feel that God's grace is all in all, and that we are nothing; next, that, for His greater glory, and for the honor of Holy Church and for the good of man, we may be "zealous for all the better gifts," and may excel in intellect as we excel in virtue.

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## A Preface to Gibbon

HILAIRE BELLOC

### *Studies*

SOME months ago I published an article in the *Dublin Review*, pointing out the unhistorical character of Gibbon's work. Briefly, my contention was that the historian Gibbon, of whom a sort of fetish has been made by English Protestants, was soaked in a thoroughly unhistorical spirit and was therefore as bad a guide as one could have to the story he proposes to tell.

The story Gibbon proposes to tell is the story of Catholic Europe growing out of the Pagan Roman Empire; but in telling this story his whole object is to belittle, to deride, and to attack the spirit of the Faith which was the very principle of life throughout the process. His animosity to the Faith so hobbles him, therefore, on the prime matter of his subject that his history is necessarily a warped and diminished picture.

I took an isolated example to show how this unhistorical spirit of Gibbon's was not only general but particular. It led Gibbon, as the unhistorical spirit always leads the historian, into gross errors not only of atmosphere, which is the most important thing of all, but of concrete detail. I chose as a small, detailed example, well suited to put under the microscope, the thoroughly false account given by Gibbon of the execution of Priscillian: its causes and its effects; its preliminaries and its sequel.

I showed that Gibbon, in his inflammation against the Catholic Church, moved by his one motive of attack against the Catholic Church which is the driving power of his whole book, had neglected some evidence, was ignorant of other evidence, had deliberately mutilated yet other evidence again. I showed how the whole of this was done, so far as Gibbon had read, which was not much, with the object of turning the episode of Priscillian into a false legend for hurting the Catholic Church, which he hated. I included in this article, published in the April number of the *Dublin Review*, last year, a suggestion that any young Catholic student of leisure might do worse than de-

vote research to the exposure of Gibbon. He needs it!

In point after point Gibbon, while pretending to rely upon first-hand authority, is really relying upon secondary authorities belonging to the generation immediately before his own. In point after point he either knows nothing of the original evidence, and therefore comes to a demonstrably false conclusion, or knows it only through the writings of others who have already garbled it. It is high time this feature in the chief of the anti-Catholic historians who have written in the English tongue was exposed, and that exposure is work well suited to any Catholic student who has before him the necessary years and leisure. No better task can be conceived than the production of what I would call "A Preface to Gibbon"; a good essay, well documented by a Catholic scholar, and this followed by a critical edition with notes exposing the errors, suppressions and misrepresentations which mark the whole of this voluminous and entertaining attack upon the Church.

#### ENGLISH TENDERNESS FOR GIBBON.

I hope I may here digress for a moment in order to beg the reader's clemency for the very personal note I have struck in these first lines. I have alluded to my article in the *Dublin* by name, and have summarized it at the outset of this article in a fashion unusual when one is discussing a general matter. But my reason for acting thus is very practical. The article which I published in the *Dublin* immediately afforded proof of the way in which Gibbon was still regarded by English Catholics, who do not appreciate in what a sea of Protestantism they live and how, unconsciously, they are affected by its general savor.

I found, from the strong protests which followed my exposure of Gibbon, that the real standing of this writer in the eyes of Europe was not grasped. Many English Catholics still looked upon him apparently as a final authority, and an exposure of his ignorance was regarded as an outrage done to accepted historical science.

As a piece of private controversy the astonishment thus evoked by a little historical examination of Gibbon would not be worth alluding to, but as an example of the way in

which Catholic study is handicapped in England it merits public attention.

It is for this reason that I return to the matter here. The horror which English Catholics feel, which the *Tablet* expressed, at a word being said against Gibbon, made evident the singular truth that violently anti-Catholic history, written with a wholly anti-Catholic motive, was accepted by many English Catholics as the normal thing; the text to which they would naturally refer in their search for historical truth. This episode of the *Dublin* and the *Tablet* set me thinking. The result of that thought I would now like to lay before the readers of *Studies*.

It was clear from the little controversy to which I refer that many English-speaking Catholics had not so much as grasped the fact that the history they were taught was alien history, enemy history, Protestant history. They seemed not to have seized the connection, for instance, between Gibbon and his master, Voltaire, not to understand that Gibbon was but a by-product of Voltaire, whose maleficent greatness they had probably never appreciated.

I considered within myself whether the episode did not justify a converse proposition: "Since" (said I to myself) "the telling of a simple little truth about this amusing but violently anti-Catholic writer, Gibbon, moves isolated Catholics in a Protestant country to such anger, would not a good work be done by showing up that writer in detail? The anger would get less and less as the proof of his incapacity got stronger and stronger, and perhaps we could at last make of Gibbon a sort of commonplace which Catholics would quote as an example of the way in which history was egregiously miswritten by the enemies of the Church."

If that first effort of mine may be regarded as a seed sown, I think there is evidence that it is beginning to sprout, and nothing could be better. I find, for instance, in the present issue of the *Dublin Review* another article on Gibbon, referring to certain of those secondary authorities upon whom Gibbon was dependent. It exposes their inaccuracy and incapacity. I, myself, in the rare moments of leisure which I have had since I first attacked the subject in the earlier part of the year, have come across new

points, all of which would serve to the main thesis I have in mind, that Gibbon is a litterateur, exceedingly entertaining but bad as an historian. It is a monstrous sentence to write. I write it with security.

I have just read, for instance, in carefully noted detail Gibbon's few words upon two fundamental points in the history of Europe: (1) the origin of the Hierarchy; (2) the traditional doctrine of the Eucharist. I do beg my Catholic readers to follow my little experience in both these points.

#### GIBBON ON EPISCOPACY.

With regard to the first, Episcopacy, I had expected, as anyone would, a closely reasoned and documented discussion and a correspondingly firm conclusion. I have read Gibbon over and over again for my pastime. I read him this time critically as a text, and the result was surprising! Before this careful study of mine I would have told you that he gave a general, though biased, view. I should have been wrong. On analyzing and noting closely I find that Gibbon is here quite negligible on this prime matter of the Hierarchy and its institution.

You may find all that Gibbon has to say in his fifteenth chapter, in the fortieth and forty-first sub-divisions of the same. It covers rather less than two pages in any one of the modern editions, and it is a perfect model of unhistorical "writing at large." Gibbon does nothing original. He reads no text at all. He simply copies blindly the second-rate and admittedly inaccurate authority of Mosheim. There is nothing in what he says which is not taken straight from Mosheim. True, he acknowledges in a footnote his respect for Mosheim, but that is not enough. A man pretending to final authority upon a crucially important historical point, the very vitals of his subject, must read his originals. It is clear that Gibbon never read them. He does not debate the contention upon the origin of Episcopacy. He does not, for he cannot on so little reading, contrast the evidence for and against the institution of the Catholic Hierarchy. He simply states the hitherto undeveloped Protestant assertion of the early eighteenth century, which he copies *en bloc* out of Mosheim, and

passes on. He is here not an historian at all. He is not a man reading and weighing evidence. He does not even pretend to such a role. He is merely a "popularizer" of a then considered, now ridiculed, partizan whom he has "lifted."

I am not arguing against Mosheim's crude contention of Bishops "evolving" in some mysterious way—without protest—and in fifty years—out of a jealously republican congress of presbyters. That contention is, or should be, negligible today. What I am setting forth is that Gibbon clearly read nothing of his originals, simply copied the deplorably inadequate and provincial Mosheim, now nearly forgotten, quoted nothing but the little Mosheim knew, and is yet called historical!

Let me give a parallel: I am myself a strong opponent of what is called the "Socialist" theory of society, that is, the theory that land and machinery should belong to the politicians. I think it is inhuman and bad, just as Gibbon thought the Catholic Church inhuman and bad. If I were writing a history of the nineteenth century, I should certainly show in my writing this disposition of my mind, just as Gibbon showed in his writing his Voltairean hatred of the Catholic Church. But I need not be on this account a bad historian of a time filled as is ours with the doctrine of Socialism.

As a detail in the discussion of nineteenth-century Socialism I should say, what is also my historical conviction, that a quarrelsome German Jew, Mordechai, who is better known under the pseudonym of "Karl Marx," was indoctrinated from Louis Blanc and from Paris, and was not the originator of the movement: I should, no doubt, sneer: I should perhaps declaim.

But what would be thought of my character as an historian if I made no mention at all of "Marx's" book on Capitalism and did not allude to the vast mass of contemporary opinion which regards its author, though wrongly, as the true father of modern Socialism, its great exponent and its original thinker? What would be thought of my character as a historian if I not only omitted all reference to "Marx's" "*Das Kapital*," but was discovered to get all my story of European Socialism from, say, the "Primrose

League," and had done little more than quote the pamphlets of that formidable society? That is our case against Gibbon; not exaggerated, not unjust.

His whole subject is the growth of the Catholic Church, or, as he prefers to call it, the decline of a pagan society. In that affair the *structure*, the skeleton, is the Catholic Hierarchy. And yet in the tremendous dispute upon the origin of the Hierarchy, Gibbon does no original reading, still less does he do any original thinking. His defenders admit that he "follows Mosheim": as one might today on the evidence for miracles "follow McCabe." But it is much worse than that. He does not merely follow, he simply copies that insignificant and superficial predecessor of his and has not read one line of the original authorities.

#### GIBBON ON THE EUCHARIST.

On the second point, that of the institution of the Eucharist, there is something far more remarkable. I beg my readers to reflect upon it in all its enormity. It is simply that Gibbon says nothing about it! You can read the whole of what Gibbon has to say on the rise, origin, and character of the Catholic Church without hearing one word about the Eucharist! That is as strong a test as you could apply to the position of Gibbon in modern England. An omission of this kind is taken for granted, and has, I think, passed without comment from any modern critic. Emphasis is vain in a catastrophe, and rhetoric is wasted in the presence of the stupendous. There never was such a *lacuna* in any historian pretending to history at all. Gibbon sets out to give you a complete picture of the nascent Church. He describes a dull Protestant conventicle of his own time in England.

His very brief allusion to dogma is a mere repetition with a sneer it is true, of the half-dead shreds of doctrine which were still familiar to the narrow Protestant world for which Gibbon wrote and from the atmosphere of which Gibbon could never escape. We have, after a fashion, the immortality of the soul; we have Baptism; we have specially emphasized the early Christian antagonism to pagan idols, which is falsely extended to mere pictures or statues. But of the central doctrine of the Eucharist not a word!



People are today so soaked in false history that some of my readers may not appreciate the scale of this thing. I would ask anyone familiar with the writing or the study of history what he would make of such an omission in any other field? There is no question here of the truth or falsehood of the early Christian creed, of whether the doctrine of the Eucharist was a fable, created and nourished by man, or the Divine and central truth of that revelation which Gibbon made it his business to attack. A man might write of the first Christian centuries with the greatest dislike of, or contempt for, Catholic doctrine and practise, and yet be historical. He might deride, attack, condemn, deny the Eucharist, which was the chief institution of the Faith, and yet be a good historian. But how can any man be called historical who omits, even in his attack upon the early Church, the chief mark of that institution?

That it was the chief mark is as much a matter of plain history as that the forms of the House of Commons are the chief mark of the English Constitution today. Admission to the sacred mysteries was *the* test, and making of the fully initiated Christian in the earliest times; their celebration was the common function of each community; their character was that which differentiated this particular society from the other religious organizations around it. It was the Eucharist that gave rise to calumnies against the Christian. It was the defense of the Eucharist which inspired the Apologists who refuted those calumnies. The Eucharist was the core of the Faith. The Faith existed with, for and by the Eucharist. It was the supreme criterion, the distinctive act, the business of the whole. One need not labor the point, for it is and has always been universally admitted. Gibbon leaves it out.

I was myself struck only quite recently by this enormity of Gibbon's. That the appreciation of it came to me so late is a proof, I think, of the way in which the Protestant atmosphere of which I speak must surround any man who approaches in this Protestant country any historical work.

Let me repeat here what I said about the point of Episcopacy. I had read the whole of Gibbon's "Decline and Fall" over and over again, for it is a most amusing piece of literature. Had anyone asked me off-hand what Gib-

bon said with regard to the early history of the Eucharist, I should have answered, as I suppose would almost anyone who was only generally acquainted with his work, "that he mentioned it, but only to deride it."

When I began my recent critical examination of the text, sentence by sentence, I noted for the first time that in point of fact he had deliberately left out what no conceivable misconception could excuse him from mentioning. I am sorry if I seem importunate, but I must beg the reader once more to pause and consider: was ever so gigantic an omission made deliberately by any man pretending to write the history of any *thing*? Let us suppose Gibbon to believe that the Mass was ultimately corrupted, or even early corrupted. Let him guess, as the more ignorant Protestants of his time all did guess (or hope) that in its origins the Eucharist was no more to the Church than a commemorative offering and consumption of bread and wine.

Even so, it would be a mere essential in the history he proposed to write that a certain characteristic act was the chief business of the society whose growth he deplored, but professed to describe. That central, characteristic act of the thing he was attacking at least demanded a statement, description and consecutive study. There is simply not one word about it!

Why did he leave it out? I think I can tell you. First, from ignorance: he rarely read his original authorities—I shall have more to say on this when I go into the details of Gibbon's work. Secondly, from fear. He could sneer at most Christian things before an audience of eighteenth-century Protestants, but there was still some danger in sneering even at *their* communion. Now ignorance and fear are between them the two spirits that destroy truth in history. When we begin the counter-attack, may we suffer from neither. It is high time for that counter-attack to be planned.

## Why Freemasonry Is Banned

**A**S early as 1738 Clement XII. excommunicated the Freemasons, and his example has been followed by Benedict XIV. (1751), Pius VII. (1821), Leo XII. (1826), Pius IX. (1869), and Leo XIII.

Catholics, therefore, who join this society contrary to the known law of the Church, are guilty of grievous sin, and incur the extreme penalty of excommunication, or exclusion from membership. This deprives the Mason of the Sacraments, of all share in the public prayers of the Church, and finally of Christian burial. The prohibition of the Church is enough for the Catholic who recognizes her Divine right to command, and knows that it is only exercised for the common good of her children. The Church, the great advocate of charity in all countries, would undoubtedly not condemn any society of men for its benevolence or love of the brethren or wantonly legislate to deprive her children of the money and help they might require in the hour of need. The reasons of her condemnation of Masonry are:

First. Masonry is undoubtedly a sect, with a code of belief, ritual and ceremonies, standing for mere naturalism in religion and for a morality founded on merely human motives. Frequently the Masons of Europe have claimed Freemasonry as the religion of nature, and the Catholic Church, therefore, as the supernatural religion of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cannot allow her members to join it. One cannot be a Mason and a Catholic at the same time, any more than he could be both Methodist and Catholic. "The God of Masonry is Nature. . . . There is no need of privileged agents making a trade of their pretended mediation" (*Revue Maçonnique*, Sept., 1835); and again: "Freemasonry is progress under every form, in every branch of human activity. It teaches us that there is only one religion, one true and therefore natural religion, the worship of humanity. . . . God is only the product of a generous but erroneous conception of humanity." (Jan., 1870, p. 539).

Second. It is undoubtedly certain that the Masons have been noted in Italy, France and other countries for a marked hatred of the Church, which, veiling itself under

the name of love and liberty (liberalism), helped in the spoliation of the Church in 1870, forced the clergy to enter the army, closed many religious houses by excessive taxation, appropriated church revenues, favored civil marriage, secularized education, and in public print and speech repeatedly pledged themselves, as in Naples in 1870, "to the prompt and radical abolition of Catholicism, and by every means to procure its utter destruction."

You may say that the American and English Masons are not of this type, and have openly severed all connection with these atheistical continental Masons. I answer that if Albert Pike's book, "Morals and Dogmas of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry," be authentic, the esoteric doctrine of the higher degrees is essentially anti-Christian and immoral. (C. Coppens, S.J., "Is Freemasonry Anti-Christian?" *American Ecclesiastical Review*, Dec., 1899). The Church, as a universal society, makes laws that have a universal application. Nor is it at all certain that American Masons refuse fellowship to the Masons of Latin Europe and America.

Third. It is also contrary to morality to pledge one's self to absolute secrecy from those who have a right to demand a revelation, especially when death is the penalty attached to disloyalty to that oath—the case with Freemasons.

Fourth. Practically, Masonry in the United States, by putting all religions on a level, fosters the spirit of indifferentism, which is only unbelief in disguise, and substitutes in the mind of the ignorant the lodge for the Church. I have heard scores of Protestant Masons say, on our missions to non-Catholics, "My lodge is church enough for me;" "the only religion I believe in is the doing good to my fellow-man," etc. I have frequently, too, heard their Protestant church-going wives trace their husbands' loss of Christian faith to the lodge. Some Protestant denominations have come out strongly against secret societies, the National Association of Chicago, for example, but they lack that universal power to command which only a Divine authority like the Catholic Church can exercise.

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